

SENATE RESOLUTION 183

By Norris

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Rufus T. Smith of
Lauderdale County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Rufus T. Smith; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Smith was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith served with acumen and alacrity in a number of positions, including operator of a five and dime store on the southeast corner of the Square in Ripley, rural mail carrier, veteran administrator, and real estate developer, and earned the respect of his peers and community alike for the exemplary quality of his work in each of his endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a member of our nation's "greatest generation," Rufus Smith honorably defended his country in World War II, serving in the D-Day invasion and the Battle of the Bulge and participating in the liberation of a concentration camp; for his service, Mr. Smith was awarded three Purple Hearts for combat injuries, a Bronze Star for heroic service, and a battlefield commission under the command of General George S. Patton; and

WHEREAS, Rufus T. Smith continued his military service by joining the Tennessee National Guard in 1947 in Dyersburg; his thirty-year career consisted of serving as a commander in the operations officer of the 117th Infantry Regiment, executive officer of the 30th Armored Division, two-time battalion commander in Dyersburg for seven years, and as the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations of the staff of the Adjutant General of the Tennessee Department of the Military; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith retired from the National Guard as a colonel, having seen a new National Guard armory built under his command in Ripley; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Smith further served his fellow citizens as a member of the Ripley Board of Aldermen for two two-year terms; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was an active and devout member of the First Baptist Church in Ripley, which he served faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Smith was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Delene Craig Smith, and was the proud father of Deborah Jenkins, Mary Kathleen Brown, and Rebecca Mills; and

WHEREAS, he is further survived by two grandchildren and a great-grandchild; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas Avery "Bud" Smith and Maude Christine New Smith; his brothers, Bill Smith and Herman Smith; and his sisters, Flossie Robison and Kathleen Greaves; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Smith leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional veteran, public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Rufus T. Smith, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Smith.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.